



Department of  
Toxic Substances  
Control

*The Mission of the  
Department of  
Toxic Substances  
Control is to  
provide the highest  
level of safety, and  
to protect public  
health and the  
environment from  
toxic harm.*



State of California



California  
Environmental  
Protection Agency

## Fact Sheet, September 2010

# Draft Cleanup Plans for the Proposed Solana Beach Elementary School Available for Public Review

A draft plan to remove soil affected with methane gas at the proposed Solana Beach Elementary School site in San Diego is available for public review and comment. The draft plan, called a Removal Action Workplan, or RAW, was submitted to the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) by Pardee Homes (the current property owner). The 11.7-acre property is located east of the intersection of Blazing Star Lane and Pacific Highlands Ranch Parkway in the Pacific Highlands Ranch community of San Diego.

Elevated levels of methane gas, believed to be the result of decomposing organic matter, were discovered in fill soil during earlier investigations at the site. Tests along the south, west, and southeast edges of the school site did not indicate elevated levels of methane gas.

DTSC, a department within the California Environmental Protection Agency, is responsible for overseeing the site environmental investigation and ensuring that mitigation and cleanup activities are conducted in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations.

### Why Cleanup is Necessary

There is **no** immediate health risk because access to the site is restricted and the public is not exposed to the methane in the soil. However, because methane can build up in enclosed spaces and has the potential to become a hazard, the DTSC

### **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD September 7 to October 6, 2010**

The draft RAW and other related project documents for this site are available for review and public comment at the locations listed on page 3. A final decision will be made after all public comments are reviewed and considered. Please submit written comments in the enclosed postage-paid envelope postmarked by October 6, or email before the deadline date no later than 5 p.m. to:

Cynthia Miller  
DTSC Public Participation Specialist  
Department of Toxic Substances Control  
9211 Oakdale Avenue  
Chatsworth, CA 91311  
[cmiller@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:cmiller@dtsc.ca.gov) for email comments

*Si desea información en español, comuníquese con Jeanne Garcia al (818) 717-6573.  
For more information about the DTSC, please visit our website at [www.dtsc.ca.gov](http://www.dtsc.ca.gov).*



recommended that Pardee Homes prepare a plan to remove and dispose of the soil affected with methane. DTSC will oversee the removal action and will ensure that it is performed in a manner that does not harm people or the environment.

### Site Background and History

The site was native land prior to the 1970s. From approximately 1974 to 1989, the site was used for agricultural purposes. No specific use was identified for the site between 1989, when agricultural use may or may not have occurred, and 2003 when the site was graded. Currently, the site is graded and remains a vacant lot.

### Environmental Investigations

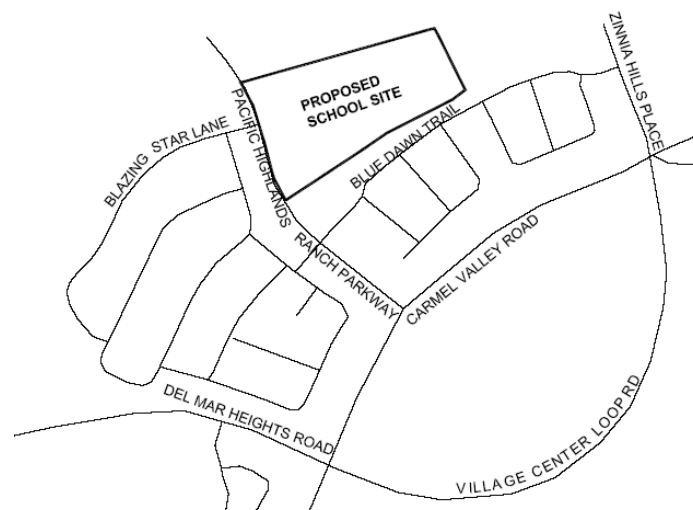
Several investigations were conducted at the site between 2003 and 2007. These investigations involved sampling soil and soil vapor from approximately 74 locations. It was determined that methane is likely being generated from decomposing organic matter, most likely plant material, located in the fill material that was used in the northeastern and north central portions of the site.

### Cleanup Options

The following are five cleanup options that were considered for the site:

- Option 1: No Action
- Option 2: Excavation and Removal of Impacted Media
- Option 3: Methane Monitoring Program
- Option 4: Methane Collection and passive vent system (without membrane)
- Option 5: Methane Collection, membrane and passive vent system

Based on the analysis of the options, Option 2: Excavation and Removal, is recommended. Soil will be excavated, temporarily stockpiled on-site, then removed to an off-site location for disposal. After an estimated 73,000 cubic yards of soil affected with methane is removed, the site will be backfilled with pre-screened soil that will be tested for methane and other compounds and approved for use under DTSC oversight.



Site Location Map

### Safety and Dust Control During Cleanup

The following actions will be implemented during this process to ensure public safety and minimize dust:

- Installing temporary fencing with windscreens for security and dust control
- Driving all vehicles at slow speeds while on the property
- Spraying of work areas with clean water to control dust
- Monitoring the air at the site to ensure the amount of dust stays at safe levels
- Backfilling the excavation with pre-screened and approved soil, followed by compacting and grading

### Transportation Route for Construction Vehicles and Work Trucks

The disposal location is located less than a mile northwest of the site. Construction vehicles will enter/exit the site and traverse the north end of Pacific Highlands Ranch Parkway. Earth material will temporarily be placed across the cul-de-sac at the end of Pacific Highlands Ranch Parkway to provide construction vehicle access while protecting underground utilities. The construction vehicles will move across a dirt road north of Pacific Highlands Ranch Parkway to the disposal site. Work at the site is limited to the hours between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. Cleanup

activities are expected to begin late-October and will last approximately four weeks.

### **California Environmental Quality Act**

As required by the California Environmental Quality Act, we looked at whether cleanup activities would harm the environment. We determined that the cleanup will not have a negative effect on the environment because of the limited area of impact and the short duration of the project. This finding is documented in a Notice of Exemption which is available at the locations listed in the following paragraphs.

### **Where to Find Site Documents**

Copies of the draft Removal Action Workplan, Notice of Exemption, and other documents related to the site are available for your review at the following locations:

#### **Carmel Valley Public Library**

3919 Townsgate Drive  
San Diego, CA 92130-2584  
(858) 552-1668

#### **Department of Toxic Substances Control**

5796 Corporate Avenue  
Cypress, California 90630

Hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Please contact the file coordinator at (714) 484-5337 or (714) 484-5336 to make an appointment.

### **DTSC Contacts**

If you have questions regarding the site, please contact:

Aslam Shareef  
DTSC Project Manager  
(714) 484-5308  
Ashareef@dtsc.ca.gov

Cynthia Miller  
DTSC Public Participation Specialist  
(818) 717-6568 or toll free (866) 495-5651  
Cmiller@dtsc.ca.gov

*For media inquiries, please call:*

Jeanne Garcia  
DTSC Public Information Officer  
(818) 717-6573  
Jgarcia1@dtsc.ca.gov

### **Notice to Hearing Impaired Individuals**

You can get information by using the California Relay Service at 1-888-877-5378 (TDD). Ask to speak to Cynthia Miller, DTSC Public Participation Specialist at (818) 717-6568.